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A Model of Emotion Transformation for Rupture and Resolution in a course of Emotion-Focused Group Therapy for Autism Spectrum: A Case Study

ENGLISH

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Autistic people report trauma-related experiences through emotional misunderstandings with typically developing peers. Difficulties in emotion processing, including recognising their own and others' emotions leads to conflicts in interpersonal relating and emotional injuries. There are limited intervention methodologies for autism on the impact of emotional injuries and how to work with interpersonal conflict. In this presentation, I present a rational-empirical model of interpersonal rupture and resolution. This model is constructed from a Task Analysis of emotion-focused group therapy with autistic adolescents (n=3) across treatment (n=11). Qualitative analysis of moment to moment shifts for each client and interactional analysis between group members was triangulated using an observer based rating scale and reliability assessed using an independent rater. I will present the model with a case example illustrating sequential emotional processing shifts. The primary change processes include improving access to and symbolizing one's own and others' painful emotional experiences. From activation of vulnerability markers, to in session negative interaction cycles (interpersonal ruptures) and facilitated mentalization of self-other dialogue, leading to an emotional deepening process that enables clients to access core pain, assertive anger and interpersonal compassion and self-agency.